6/18/71

Dear Howard,

Relet 15, the Times stuff adds but unessential details to what we already knew, agreed, esp. as you'll see in going over my files. Had I been called upon to write this fact as a novel, if would have been simple. I've nit yet seen the originals, haven't had time to read the Post's reporting of them, thus know only the little I've heard on radio and TV, and have spent less time at that that ordinarily I would because of the suit and the diminishing housekeeping responsibilities as Lil makes good improvement.

I disagree with your suspicion, that the Nixon administration leaked it. I also didn't believe this before Zion edged out from under his rock (making me wonder much about him). I feel that it was an anti-war thing, but that the Nixon finks decided to make the most of it. Thus they delayed doing anything for at least three days (and they could have known before it began to appear), and then suddenly started hollering "national security". In this manner, they can have Johnson take the rap for Nixon's inability to do anything significant about the war and still campaign against the press. They dislike the Times especially. But whether or not they can cause any punishment to the Times as a matter of law, by the time they have finished with all these court things they will have thoroughly intimidated the press by a simple means: the cost of defending whatever they do. The Times can (and should) win while losing a fortune. Most business have a very sensitive pocketbook nerve.

There may be some side benefits. I think the major media are beginning to gang together better. There are things that have not surface. One of the most major has steadfastly refused to air me in any way, but has arranged-and it was not my idea-for me to see their lawyer on such matters. NBC, without publicity, has hired a lawyer to file a brief amicus curiae in the Caldwell case, the black NYTimes San Francisco reporter who refused to tell what he learned about the Panthers. Two years ago this would not have happened. CBS's Salant, a fink if there ever was one, is standing behind Rather, who has been very moderate in his reporting the WH finds uncongenial. All good signs, if late in coming. And I fear that the press will, in the end, buckle.

I have read the clips. Thanks. No time for comment now. It is time to be a housefrau again.

Best,